

The Montreal International Documentary Festival “Where all stories meet” Announcing the RIDM 2019 program

Montreal, Wednesday October 23, 2019 - The **Montreal International Documentary Festival (RIDM)** is proud to announce the program for its 22nd edition, coming this November 14 to 24. With **154 films** from **47 countries** and numerous free discussions and activities, the RIDM is, more than ever, an essential event in the world of **auteur documentary cinema**.

This year, the festival will present **20 world premieres, 17 North American premieres, 17 Canadian premieres and 71 Quebec premieres**. With **57 films from Quebec and the rest of Canada**, the RIDM is delighted to offer exclusive screenings of the latest films by acclaimed filmmakers along with a wealth of films by new talents. Sylvain L'Espérance and Marie-Claude Loiselle (*The Song of Empedocles*), Simon Beaulieu (*White Noise*), Brett Story (*The Hottest August*), Carlos Ferrand (*Jongué, a Nomad's Journey*), Marlene Edoyan (*The Sea Between Us*), Sofia Bohdanowicz and Deragh Campbell (*MS Slavic 7*), Tasha Hubbard (*nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up*), Yung Chang (*This Is Not a Movie*), Claude Demers (*Une femme, ma mère*) and Denis Côté (*Wilcox*) will present their films in the National Feature Competition.

For the third year in a row, the festival is pleased to maintain gender parity among its guest filmmakers, and reaffirms its commitment to promoting women filmmakers with **78 female directors (and 67 male directors)**. This year, the festival will host no fewer than **42 international artists** and **11 awards** will be presented to the makers of the winning films in competition.

The RIDM is pleased to launch this year's program with *The Disappearance of my Mother*, the début feature by **Beniamino Barrese**. The film is a portrait of the filmmaker's mother, Benedetta Barzini, a 1960s fashion icon and muse to Warhol and Dalí who now prefers to avoid the camera at all costs. The film will be preceded by the world premiere of *Nitrate*, a Quebec-made short by **Yusra Benziane**, made as part of the Regards sur Montréal residency program.

The Canadian film *Drag Kids* will close the festival. The film follows four colourful pre-teens with a shared passion: drag performances. With a sympathetic eye, **Megan Wennberg** captures their triumphs and moments of doubt as they seek liberty and self-expression.

SUPPORTING NEW TALENT

Grounded in the realities of life and cinema, for many years the RIDM has showcased **new Canadian and international filmmakers** by programming their first films. Among the festival's **international selections** are *Chève Lavi* by American director Sam Ellison, following two young Haitians living in exile; *Swarm Season* by Sarah Christman, filmed in Hawaii, immerses viewers in a sensory odyssey, following a mother and daughter as they raise wild bees resistant to challenging conditions; and *While We Are Here* takes us to New York, where Clarissa Campolina and Luiz Pretti search for signs of intimacy in the modern city.

In 2019, the **Canadian program** features a new competition for first features: **New Visions**. This competition will include *Another Word for Learning* (Jadis Mariette Dumas) about the education, ambitions and culture of a Kwakwaka'wakw girl; *Cavebirds* (Emily Gan) delves into father-daughter relationships by exploring love, home and heritage; *Sisters: Dream & Variations* (Catherine Legault) invites us to discover the creative world of two artists with Icelandic roots; *Don't Worry, the Doors Will Open* (Oksana Karpovych) shows us Ukraine through its old trains, as run-down as they are overcrowded; and *The Eyes of my Love* (Rui Silveira) looks at an inspiring tradition in a Portuguese village. The new section is presented in collaboration with Post-Moderne and the Société civile des auteurs multimédia (SCAM).

This year, in addition to returning sections such as **States of the World** and **Portraits**, which include strong films like *Adolescentes* (Sébastien Lifshitz), a long-term observation documentary that follows two girls from the age of 14 to adulthood, or *Cunningham* (Alla Kovgan), a 3D portrait of legendary choreographer Merce Cunningham, there are **3 new sections** at the 2019 festival in recognition of the particular strengths of this year's crop of films.

NEW FORMS OF ACTIVISM

Documentary is the activist film genre par excellence. The RIDM is proud to present works in which protagonists dare to fight to improve their societies, as well as films with a collaborative element in their production. The festival is pleased to announce the creation of an 8-film section dedicated to activist works: **Resistance**. The section includes films that inspire struggles for change: *Jordan River Anderson*, *The Messenger* (Alanis Obomsawin) about the unjust treatment of Indigenous children by the healthcare system; *Advocate* (Philippe Bellaïche and Rachel Leah Jones), a portrait of an Israeli lawyer who specializes in representing Palestinian defendants; and *Ainsi soient-elles* (Maxime Faure), which profiles eight inspiring octogenarian feminist nuns from Quebec.

In several other works, activism also means exciting new approaches to filmmaking. The Moroccan film *Amussu*, for example, is co-directed by the entire Amazigh community featured in the film, which documents their struggle against a mine that is drying out their land. A call to rebellion, *Espero tua (re)volta* (Eliza Capai), is narrated by three participants in the mass student demonstrations that have shaken Brazil since 2013, and revisits images filmed from the inside up to the election of Jair Bolsonaro. Lastly, *No Gold for Kalsaka* (Michel K. Zongo) documents an environmental disaster while borrowing formal elements from the western.

RETHINKING HISTORY

Never have we been exposed to more images and news coverage. Through a selection of films focusing on history, the RIDM seeks to highlight fascinating approaches that use archival footage to reflect on the political impact of images that rewrite history, or that present research allowing us to make sense of the present. The new **History Revisited** section includes 6 films that take a look at history through fresh eyes.

A true visual historian of the former USSR, Sergei Loznitsa documents equally grandiose and grotesque commemorations in *State Funeral*, made entirely from archival footage of Stalin's funeral and reflecting on the political impact of the images. In the epic 14-hour *Women Make Film: A New Road Movie Through Cinema* (Mark Cousins), we re-learn film history through the prism of the remarkable work done by women behind the camera. *Status and Terrain*, by German filmmaker Ute Adamczewski, presents archival footage and new material filmed in the ex-DDR to highlight coercive political measures implemented early in the 20th century, while *Marceline. A Woman. A Century* (Cordelia Dvorák) looks back on the incredible life of the wife of Joris Ivens and close friend of Simone Weil.

NATURE IS WATCHING

As climate-crisis alarms keep growing more insistent, it is more important than ever to take specific countermeasures, and also to reassess our relationship with nature. The new **Natural Histories** section, with 9 films, jumps back to the past with *Space Dogs* (Elsa Kremser, Levin Peter), which questions the idea of exploration as well as our relationship with animals. The new film by Nikolaus Geyrhalter, *Earth*, looks at the marks humanity has made on the planet, filming terrestrial materiality and its upheavals. *The Seer and the Unseen* (Sara Dosa) follows Icelandic activist Ragga Jónsdóttir as she fights to defend nature against the construction projects that have been multiplying since the 2008 financial crisis. In the Canadian competition, *The Hottest August* (Brett Story) is a lucid, empathetic portrait of contemporary American society, from Trump to climatic warming. The international medium-length film *Fordlandia Malaise* (Susana De Sousa Dias) looks back on a neo-colonialist industrial project launched in 1928 deep in the Amazon rainforest. The UXdoc section will also highlight environmental issues with *SwampScapes*, a virtual reality experience celebrating the exceptional ecosystem of the Florida Everglades, in which Kim Grinfeder, Elizabeth Miller and Juan Carlos Zaldivar follow several experts on the region, known for its biodiversity, against a backdrop of breathtaking images.

RETROSPECTIVES

Laura Huertas Millán – Decolonizing Ethnography

A Colombian artist based in France, Laura Huertas Millán creates formally and conceptually rich works that draw equally on documentary, ethnography and visual arts, while questioning each discipline's assumptions. Her work on the decolonization of conventional ethnography is showcased in a series of "ethnographic fictions" in which the cross-pollination of genres and the use of fiction enable liberation from the colonial gaze, the emancipation of subjects and the creation of new narratives.

Luc Moullet – One Step Forward, One Step Sideways

The *enfant terrible* of the French New Wave, filmmaker Luc Moullet made ten feature films and some 30 shorts, from the 1960s to the 2010s, creating a body of work as deep as it is atypical. Known for deadpan humour and a critical, anti-authoritarian outlook, a DIY aesthetic and strong sense of the absurd, Moullet's films were praised by his peers (Godard, Straub, Rivette) despite an approach that unsettled more than a few viewers.

INTERSECTIONS

The RIDM organizes many activities in conjunction with its film program. These companion events enrich the documentary and interactive selections with talks, discussions, workshops, concerts and special events throughout the 11 days of the festival.

Workshops

For this edition, the RIDM will host a workshop **on film and sound design** in collaboration with the Laboratoire de création sonore at the Université de Montréal. Using the film *Symphony of the Ursus Factory* as a starting point, the workshop will be led by three experts in sound for documentaries.

Discussions

First, **Images of extremism** will try to demystify the relationship between images and the far right, in a discussion moderated by Benjamin Ducol, head of research at the Center for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence. The panel will also include Isabelle Porter, a journalist at Le Devoir, Samuel Tanner, professor at the International Centre for Comparative Criminology, Gabriella Coleman, Wolfe Chair in Scientific and Technological Literacy at McGill University, and Gabriel Allard, documentarist and sound designer (*T'es où Youssef, La bombe*).

Focusing on the relationship between art and ethics, the discussion **From theatre to cinema: documentary practices and ethics** will be moderated by **Patricia Bergeron**, who is presenting the hybrid participatory experience *Hotspot* in the UXdoc section. Joining the discussion will be Philippe Ducros, theatrical director, Kathia Rock, actress, documentary filmmakers Émilie B. Guérette (*L'Autre Rio*, RIDM 2017) and Will Prosper, whose film *Kenbe la - Until We Win* is in the **Resistance** section this year.

Screenings - Debates

After the second screening of *That Which Does Not Kill*, director Alexe Poukine, Anne-Martine Parent, associate professor in the French literature department at the Université du Québec à Chicoutimi (UQAC) and Laurence Olivier, a doctoral candidate in UQAM's artistic theory and practice program, both of the Centre Figura, will join the public in a debate titled **Speaking the unspeakable**. They will field questions, listen to opinions and share their experiences with the audience after a screening of the documentary, which tackles the troubling issue of rape.

The Canadian documentary *Conviction*, by directors Nance Ackerman, Teresa MacInnes and Ariella Pahlke, argues for a justice system that promotes healing over punishment. What would you have needed in your life to keep you out of prison? The reflections of the film's protagonists, Bianca, Treena, Laura and Caitlin, four inmates from Nova Scotia, will set the tone for the discussion. Titled **Rehabilitation or punishment?** it will be led by the film's directors and Aleksandra Zajko, Associate Executive Director of the Quebec chapter of the Elizabeth Fry Society.

Special events

VISIONS, an experimental and documentary film series, will present works by the Mexican avant-garde feminist collective **Los Ingrávidos**, with two programs of short films that delve into the collective imagination, bringing together archival materials, Aztec mythology and revolutionary poetry.

Emceed by Matthieu Dugal, **La soirée de la relève Radio-Canada** is a great opportunity to see short documentaries by new Quebec filmmakers in a warm and festive setting, with the filmmakers present. The Prix Radio-Canada will be presented to one of the six directors by a jury of documentary professionals. The films will then be made available on ICI TOU.TV.

Assembled by Le Carrousel international du film de Rimouski on the theme of winter, **a program of international shorts for children ages 4 to 9** will delight the young audience. The screenings will be followed by a fun educational workshop, including a snack.

To highlight the talent of young Indigenous creators and the importance of the issues they explore, the RIDM and Wapikoni Mobile are joining forces to present **7 X Wapikoni Mobile**: seven shorts to be screened in rotation before each feature film in the Canadian competition. These touching, original and sometimes hilarious films reveal new voices and celebrate the achievements of Wapikoni Mobile over the last 15 years.

To mark the 35th anniversary of the production company **Rapide-Blanc**, a special evening will bring together the company's founders, close partners and key filmmakers, inviting the public to share in the company's imaginative world. **Oscar Thiffault** (1988) by **Serge Giguère** will be screened for free as part of the festivities.

This year, the now-traditional **public listening session** will present the French audio work **De rue et d'amour** by Julien Baroghel. The session will start with the three winning short pieces from the 2019 edition of the "Le réel à l'écoute" competition.

The RIDM will also present the documentary video installation **Dénombrement, un regard sur l'incarcération au féminin** created as part of a community art project spearheaded by the Quebec chapter of the Elizabeth Fry Society, featuring the protagonists of the work, members of the Art Entr'Elles collective, in collaboration with director Émilie B. Guérette and scenographer Hubert Lafore.

In a welcoming setting, **Inis** will present its documentary program and documentary direction mini-program with instructors and graduates present, and give the public the chance to participate in a variety of discussions on the key ingredients for a well-made documentary.

Presented by Radio-Canada, selected excerpts from the podcast **Bienvenue à Cité-des-Prairies** (ICI PREMIÈRE + URBANIA) will be available for listening for the first time, taking us inside the lives of young people in a rehabilitation centre when two motivated youth workers invite them to take part in the Winter Classic, a day of outdoor hockey. The listening session will be followed by a discussion, moderated by Marie-Ève Tremblay, with director Gabriel Allard and other speakers.

The Jeunes pousses NFB X UQAM interactive school presents **Bubble**, a project that takes us to Montreal in 2050, in a world where climate change was not taken seriously, leading each person to fend for themselves. There will be a public presentation with members of the team on Tuesday, November 19 at 8 p.m.

Music programming

The **Beat Dox Sessions** will be the highlight of several evenings at RIDM Headquarters, with concerts and DJ sets. These parties are a chance for the public and film professionals to get together in a casual setting after the day's screenings. This year's program, curated by Pomeline Delgado, invites us to dance to plenty of great beats. Dance the night away with Annie Sama, Akpossoul, NOVEMBER, Bibi Club and many more.

The RIDM thanks its partners

The RIDM wishes to acknowledge the support of its institutional, primary and associate partners who have helped make this 22nd annual festival a memorable one. Thanks to the ministère de la Culture et des Communications, SODEC, the Secrétariat à la région métropolitaine, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ville de Montréal, Telefilm Canada, the Conseil des arts de Montréal, Bell Media, Canal D, the Canada Media Fund, Télé-Québec, FACTOR, Tourisme Montréal, the CSN, Radio-Canada, Université du Québec à Montréal, Concordia University, Post-Moderne, the Société Civile des Auteurs Multimédia (SCAM), Studios Saint-Antoine, Mouvement des caisses Desjardins, PRIM, BDO, the Cinémathèque québécoise, Cineplex, the Quartier des Spectacles Partnership and Candlewood Suites Montréal.

*Quebec's only film festival dedicated to documentaries, the **Montreal International Documentary Festival** presents the best reality-based films, including the works of established directors and new talents.*

The 22nd annual RIDM will take place from November 14 to 24, 2019.

at the Cinémathèque québécoise, Centre Pierre-Péladeau, Cineplex Odeon Quartier Latin,
Cinéma du Parc, Cinéma Moderne and Concordia University.

Information : www.ridm.ca / info@ridm.ca

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